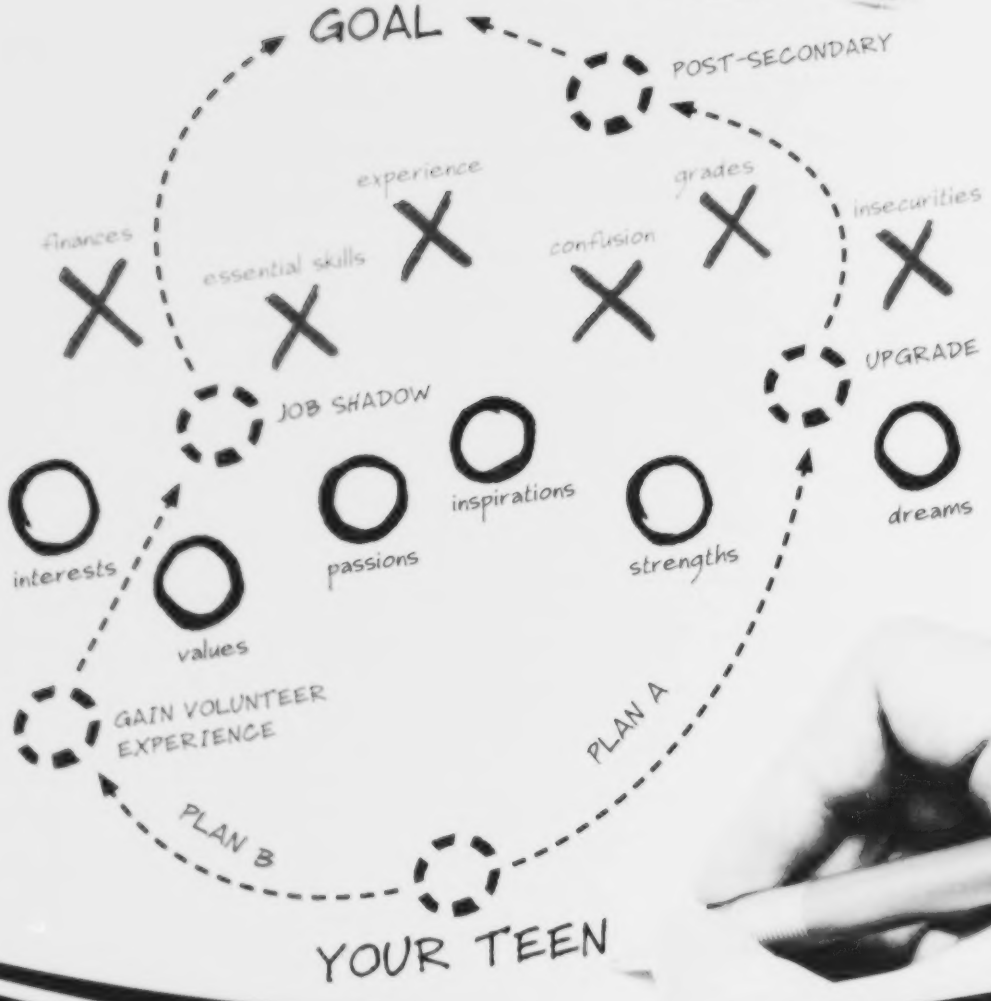
CAREER COACHING YOUR TEENS

A Guide for Parents



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Alberta

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Additional copies can be ordered from the Learning Resources Centre by telephone at 780-427-5775 or by fax at 780-422-9750.

Career Practitioners/Teachers

This guide was prepared to help parents support their teens as they explore career options. It provides suggestions on career planning, how to talk to teens about career choices and how to find an ally who can help prepare teens for entry into the workforce.

You may wish to use this guide as a background document for parent-teacher meetings or drawing on the suggestions to develop activities and/or referring parents and their teens to the resource list for additional information.

For further information, resources and strategies to help parents discuss career planning with their teens check out Central Alberta Career Prep Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work workshop guides at **http://www.careerprep.ab.ca/guidingyouth.htm**

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This information was accurate, to the best of our knowledge, at the time of printing. Labour market information and educational programs are subject to change, and you are encouraged to confirm with additional sources of information when making career, education and employment decisions.

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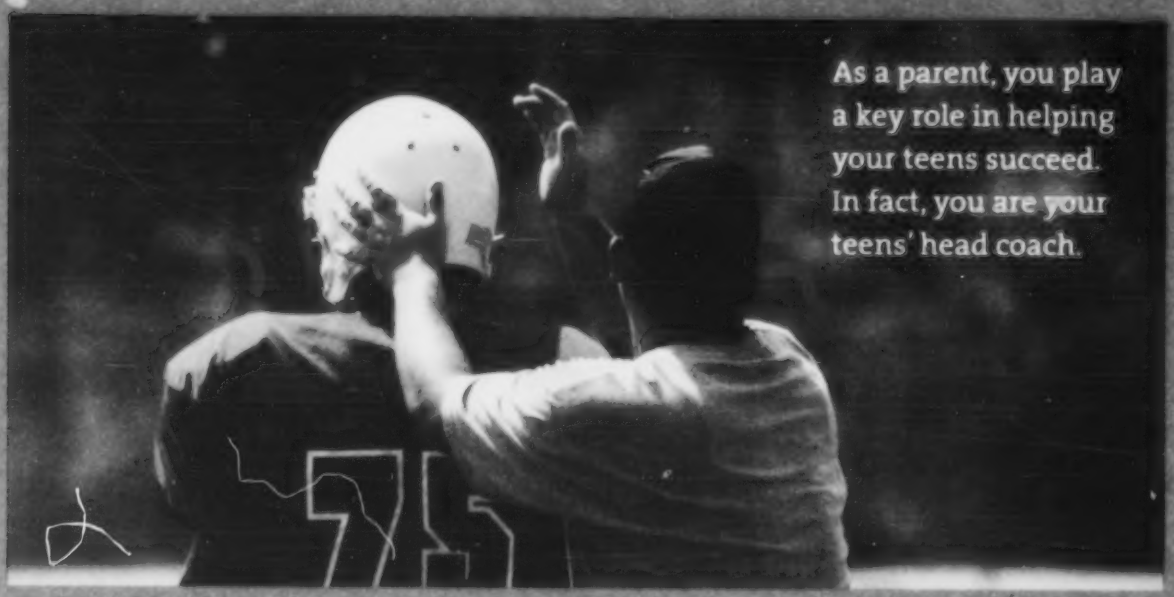
Table of Contents



Introduction 2

Your Role as a Career Coach . . 3

Keeping current 4

Talking to your teens 5

Being a good role model 5

Getting help 6

What is Career Planning? 7

What are the steps? 7

A road map for teens 8

How you can help 10

- Step 1: Knowing yourself 10
- Step 2: Exploring possibilities. 12
- Step 3: Making a choice 13
- Step 4: Making it happen 14

Tools for Successful Career Development and a Successful Career 15

Career maps 15

Workplace information 16

Essential skills 17

Goals 18

Career portfolio 19

Finances 19

The High Five 20

Summing Up 21

Key Terms 22

Resources 23

Alberta Employment and Immigration (AEI) 23

- Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website 23
- Alberta Career Information Hotline 23
- AEI service centres 24
- Youth Connections 24

Sector Councils 24

Helpful Resources by Topic 24

- Alberta's labour market 24
- Apprenticeship 24
- Career portfolio 25
- Discussing career planning with your teens 25
- Education planning 25
- Essential skills 25
- Goal setting 26
- High Five messages 26
- Identifying interests, values, and skills 26
- Paying for post-secondary education and training 26
- Researching occupations 26

Introduction

As your teens go through high school, they will begin to think about their future and about different occupations.

They may have questions about:

- how to find their career passion
- how to choose a career path that's right for them
- what's going on in the labour market
- which post-secondary schools to attend and what grades they'll need to be accepted
- what would happen if they changed their minds after they made a choice.

As a parent, you play an important role in supporting your teens with encouragement and information as they begin their career and life journeys.

This guide was developed to help you support your teens as they begin to explore their career options and make decisions about their future. It provides practical ideas and resources you can use in your role as a parent, a coach and an ally.

QUICK FACT:

Parents are the greatest influence on teens who are choosing a career path. The teens interviewed for this publication listed their parents as the people they were most likely to talk to about careers.

* **Alberta Government,** Alberta Employment and Immigration

Your Role as a Career Coach

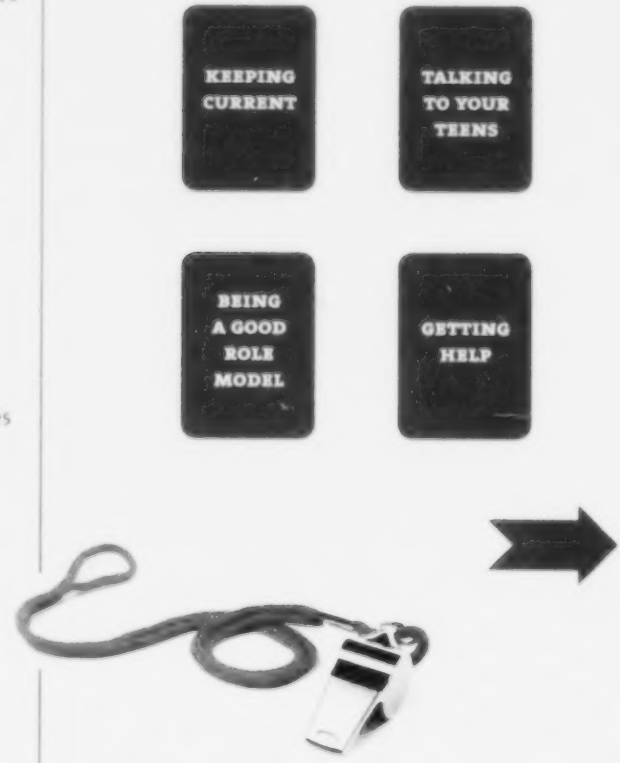
Coaching is about being an ally, helping your teens realize their ideas and goals and make decisions.

A coach is a guide, a helper, a supporter, an encourager and a partner. An ally is someone who helps us co-operate with another.

Becoming a career coach and ally means...

- helping your teens find their passions and explore their interests
- building on positive career-related experiences in your life and theirs
- helping your teens set challenging but achievable career goals
- recognizing and rewarding your teens for their efforts and successes
- supporting your teens in their career-related choices and through their mistakes
- connecting your teens with the people and resources they need to help them make informed career decisions
- encouraging your teens to "try on" careers by volunteering or through work experience or job-shadowing opportunities at school or in the community
- exploring career and educational options with your teens
- encouraging your teens to try new things
- being informed about the career-related opportunities from which your teens can choose.

The following section details four factors that will help you be a good career coach for your teens:



Keeping current

The world of work has changed dramatically in the past few decades.

Sometimes it's hard to see the changes especially if you've been part of the workforce or in your chosen occupation for a long time. You may need to do a bit of research to identify new workplace trends, find out about emerging occupations and discover which industries are expected to have the greatest demand for workers. You'll need this information to help your teens make informed career decisions.

Keeping up-to-date can be as simple as reading the newspaper or searching the internet.

For more information, see the list of resources on p. 23.

Your teens may be facing some of the same things you did when you were young, but there may also be differences. Today's teens have grown up using technology. They're adaptable, and they value change. And they're entering the labour market at a time when there are more jobs than workers.

The choices available to today's teens have increased dramatically, but the amount of information they have to sort through can be overwhelming. To help your teens prepare, it's important to understand what they're going through.

The teens interviewed for this publication shared a number of concerns:

- They aren't sure how they want to live their lives.
- They fear that they may not achieve their dreams.
- They worry that making the wrong choice now will affect them for a long time.
- They don't feel they can talk to their parents about what's going on in their lives.
- They're afraid they won't have time to find themselves and discover their passions.
- There is so much to decide and so much going on in their lives.
- They haven't been exposed to enough occupations to know which appeal to them.

The workplace of today

Most of Canada's youth today are likely to experience:

- an average of 17 employment transitions in their working lifetime
- a variety of occupations in up to five different sectors of the economy
- a variety of concurrent work roles (multi-tasking)
- planned and unplanned gaps of no work.

Source: *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work* workshop guides by Central Alberta Career Prep

Talking to your teens

Many of the teens interviewed for this publication said they want to discuss their careers and career concerns with their parents.

It's important to talk to your teens to show that you're interested—and there to help. Here are some suggestions to get the conversation started:

- Bring discussions about career choices and interests to the kitchen table.
- Use time spent in the car to ask your teens about their interests and activities.
- Get involved in an activity that you do with your teens. For example, consider volunteering together.
- Make a list of occupations of interest. Each month, select an occupation to explore and discuss with your teens.
- Clip out career-related articles. Put them on the fridge for everyone to see and discuss.
- Explore music, books, websites, movies, TV shows, sports and other things your teens are interested in. Use these as starting points for career-related discussions.

Being a good role model

There are many ways you can help your teens to plan a career.

Sometimes your role may be to simply listen or offer encouragement. Sometimes you'll need to get more involved.

One way to support your teens is to offer your own experience and model good career planning. Here are some tips (adapted from *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work* workshop guides):

- Talk with your teens about positive work experiences you've had. This sends the message that work can be meaningful and enjoyable.
- Balance is important. Let your teens see that life is a combination of hard work and enjoyment.
- Learning is a lifelong process. Embrace change and try new things to show your teens that it's fine to take risks and that lifelong learning and skill development are important.
- Show your teens that it's okay to make mistakes—in work and in life. Share how your own mistakes have helped you learn and grow.

You're an important role model for your teens, and your actions, words and demeanour speak volumes about your values and opinions.

Getting help

Navigating the process of connecting with your teens and understanding career planning is a challenge. You'll quickly realize it's important to find coaches and allies for yourself, as well as being a coach and ally to your teens.

Allies come in many different forms. Some will be with you for a long time. Others will help with a specific situation. However long they are involved, it's important to know who you can turn to for support.

You can find allies among the people who play a major role in your teens' life—coaches, teachers, guidance counsellors, friends, family, elders, religious or community leaders, or even other parents. You can also find helpful people at the nearest Alberta Employment and Immigration (AEI) service centre. (See p.23 for details.)

Finding allies

Think about which of your allies could help you:

- understand your teens' interests, strengths and beliefs and how to explore them
- find out about available careers and opportunities
- learn about relevant education and training opportunities
- come up with ideas on how to pay for your teens' education
- support your teens through the issues or challenges they're facing.

What is Career Planning?

Career planning is a dynamic process.

Teens don't need to worry about making one big career decision that they'll have to live with the rest of their life. They just need to find an occupation that fits their skills, interests, values and beliefs right now. As they journey through life they'll continue to evaluate and adjust their career plans in response to external factors such as changes in the workplace, and internal factors like a shift in their interests or a change in their life circumstances.

All the while, they'll be creating the life they want to live.

What are the steps?

Career planning is a continuous cycle that includes four steps:

1. Knowing yourself.
2. Exploring possibilities.
3. Making a choice.
4. Making it happen.

Career planning is a lifelong journey, and the cycle repeats over and over again. Every journey has its unexpected turns, pit stops and even a few speeding tickets!

As your teens make occupational choices, things may happen to change their plans. Help your teens prepare for the good and the bad along their journey and discuss the importance of having a backup plan.

As a parent, your role is to coach your teens through each of these steps. We'll give you some tips in the next section.

THE CAREER PLANNING CYCLE: A ROAD MAP FOR TEENS

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF

Find out your interests, values, personality, skills, assets and resources.

EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

Research, try things out, narrow down your choices and find the best fit.

MAKE A CHOICE

Develop a plan and set career goals that will take you where you want to go.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

Put your plan into action—learning along the way and achieving your goals.

Planning a career is a bit like planning a trip. After all, life is a journey and if you take it step by step, it will be enjoyable and memorable.

In developing a career plan, here are the steps you'll need to take over and over again. Each time, you'll have more life lessons and experience you can put to work for you.

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF

Find out your interests, values, beliefs, personality, skills, assets and resources. Who are you? What's important to you? What are you good at? What do you like to do, and how do you like to learn? What do you really want in your life?

EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

Research a number of occupations and try things out before you narrow down your choices. Armed with the information you've gathered about yourself, make a list of options that are the best fit for you.

MAKE A CHOICE

Develop a plan and set career goals that will take you where you want to go. This is a critical step in the career planning process. You'll need to create your own personal vision of a meaningful and satisfying future, identify goals to create your desired future and think about what you'll need to do to move forward. Keep in mind that you don't have to choose a specific occupation: just focus on a general career direction.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

Put your plan into action. Identify the requirements for working in your chosen career. You'll learn along the way as you work toward your goals.

* Alberta Government, Alberta Employment and Immigration

STEP: 1

Knowing yourself

How you can help

In this step, your teens gather information about themselves. The purpose is to "tune in" and identify their interests, values, beliefs, personality, skills, strengths, learning styles and preferred lifestyle. This is an important exercise: people who choose occupations that match their interests, values and skills tend to enjoy their work. They also tend to achieve their career and personal goals.

Teens may have a hard time pinpointing their strengths and interests. They may not see how the things they enjoy doing can launch them on a fulfilling career path.

One way for teens to gather information about themselves is through formal tests or self-assessment inventories: your teens may have completed such a test or inventory at school.

You can help your teens get to know themselves and find their passion by brainstorming to build on something they already love to do. Developing a career map can also be helpful. (See p. 15 for details.)

Brainstorming examples

Ask probing questions to find out what attracts your teens to their favourite pursuits, and to get them thinking about related occupations that might interest them.

If your daughter wants to be a professional basketball player, you could have a conversation that goes like this:

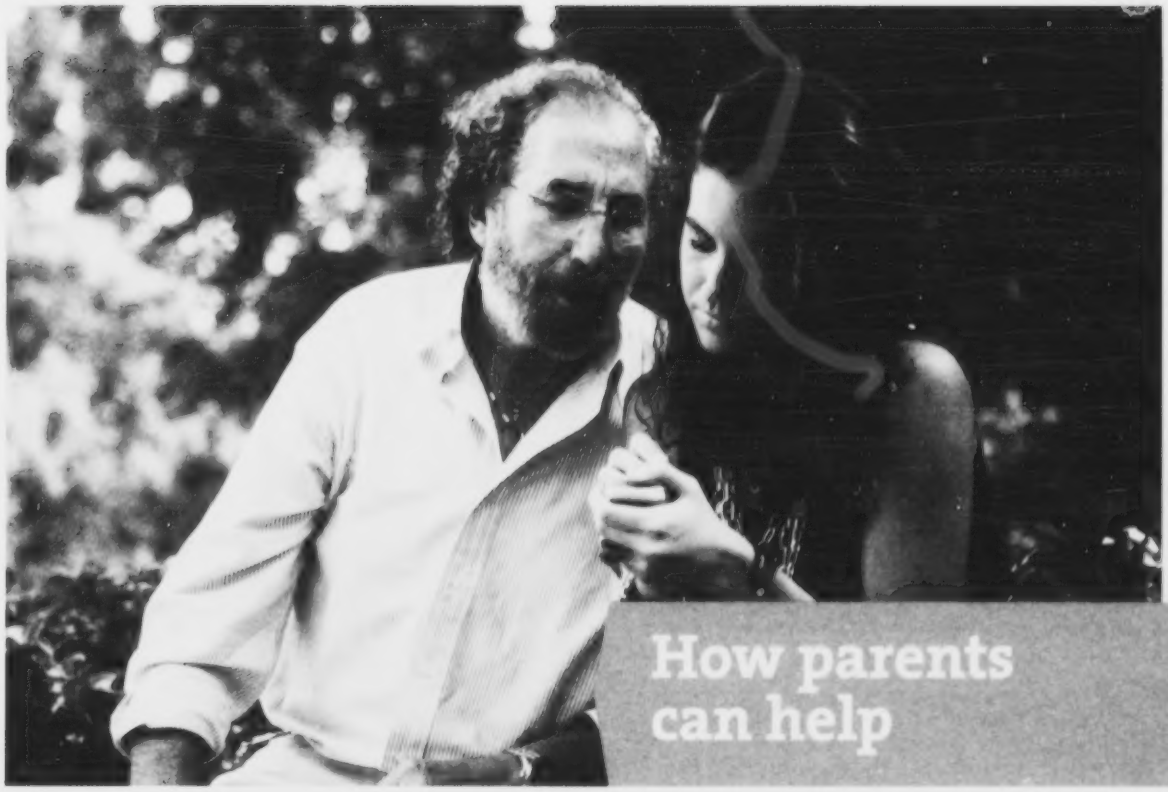
> What would you like about playing basketball as an occupation?

> What other careers have basketball players gone on to after basketball?
>
> Do any of these interest you?

If your son wants to be a musician, your conversation might go like this:

> What's good about making a living as a musician?

> When a musician makes an album and goes on tour, what are some of the other occupations involved?
>
> Do any of these interest you?



How parents can help

Be curious! Ask questions that will help your teens identify their likes and dislikes and what is important to them. Ask positive, focused questions that will help them examine their preferences, talents and abilities and begin to see patterns and possibilities. Here are some examples:

What's your favourite subject at school? Why?

What did you like about working on _____? What was challenging?

What do you see when you picture your life a few years from now?

Have you ever watched someone work and thought, "That's my dream job"?

Is there something you've always wanted to do but were afraid to try?

Be observant and generous with your praise. We often don't know where our skills lie until someone else sees the value in what we do.

Pay attention. How your teens spend their time is often a clue to what they are good at. Is your son or daughter studious? Athletic? Involved in student politics? In a band? Talk about how such interests might fit into their career plans.

Share what you enjoy about your own job. Talk about how your values, interests, skills and personality link to your work.

Tip: Some teens may have more success reflecting on their experiences by writing in a journal rather than having a discussion.

STEP: 2

Exploring possibilities

Armed with the information they have gathered about themselves, your teens' next step is to generate a list of options that matches their profiles. This involves researching various occupations and industry sectors, trying things out, narrowing down their ch ices and figuring out which ones are the best fits.

Tip: Thinking about a career sector rather than a specific occupation will help your teens generate a bigger list of options that match their interests. A sector is a group of similar occupations that require similar skill sets, values and interests. For example, teacher, tutor and teacher's aide are occupations in the education sector.

How and why do people choose a career?

Everyone is different, but here are some common reasons people choose a career:

1. Passion

A lifelong passion can turn into a career.

2. Inspiration

People choose careers because someone or something inspired them along their career path.

3. Experience

Travelling, working or starting a family can lead people to certain career paths.

How parents can help

Use your connections. When your teens are researching an occupation, it's helpful to interview someone working in the field. Offer to use your network of friends, family, co-workers and neighbours to find someone (or someone who knows someone) working in that occupation.

See p. 16 for interview tips.

Offer support. Encourage your teens to be open to new ideas and to think about non-traditional occupations, emerging fields, self-employment or apprenticeship.

Help your teens research the labour market and specific occupations. The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) is a great source. Check the website at **alis.alberta.ca** for current labour market information, employment trends, occupational profiles, and wage and salary information.

For more links, see p. 16 and the "Resources" section on p. 23.

STEP: 3

Making a choice

This is a critical step in the career planning process. Armed with self-knowledge and research, your teens' next step is to create their own personal vision of a meaningful, satisfying future. They'll identify goals and think about what they'll need to do to move forward.

Your teens don't have to choose a specific occupation at this stage. The task is to focus on a general career direction.

Review the information your teens have gathered on various occupations. Discuss how each occupation fits with what your teens know about themselves and what they want their life to look like. For example, ask your teens how well each of their occupational choices rates when they consider the following factors:

- what's important to them
- what skills they'll use
- lifestyle factors
- what they'll gain
- what their interests are
- financial factors
- what they'll give up
- their needs.

Share your own career experience with your teens. Explain how your job has parts that match and parts that don't match your preferences.

Encourage your teens to look at the options again and decide which factors are most important when it comes to a fit for them. Developing a list of pros and cons can help to narrow down the choices.

Acknowledge your teens' fears, and remind them that career decisions aren't carved in stone: they can always be changed later.

Express confidence in your teens' ability to make a decision that's right for them.

Offer your support to help your teens plan the next steps.

Tip: Some teens have a hard time making a decision. If this is the case for your teens, encourage them to make short-term decisions that keep as many options open as possible.

How parents can help

Sharing your experience is a great place to start.

Teens respect honesty. They want to know that what they're feeling isn't so different from what you felt at their age.

Think back to the way you saw your future when you were a teenager. How much of what you experienced do you think your teens are going through?

What did you want to be at your child's age? What did you become?

What were your interests and passions? How are these reflected in your current job?

Who helped you find your career path? How did you get where you are now?

What stories could you share about your own experience?

What lessons did you learn from your experiences?

How did the adults in your life help you along your path?

What changes would you make if you could?

What are the things you wouldn't change?

What did you learn from your experience with your own parents?

STEP: 4

Making it happen

Once your teens have a goal, they'll need a plan to achieve it. Identifying the requirements for working in their chosen field is a good place to start.

How parents can help

Help your teens identify the education and training they'll need for their chosen careers. Break out the requirements into specific, manageable tasks. For each task set goals and timelines for completion.

Here are some questions to think about:

- Which post-secondary institutions offer the programs your teens need?
- Which post-secondary institution is the best choice? Does it offer information sessions or open houses? If so, what are the dates?
- What are the prerequisites for acceptance into the program? What are the admissions quotas?
- Are there any special requirements? (For example, do applicants need tools or equipment? experience? a career investigation?)
- What is the application deadline?
- Is funding available? Are your teens eligible for any scholarships? Do they need to apply to Students Finance? What are the application deadlines for scholarships or student loans?

Lifelong learning is key.

More and more occupations require considerable post-secondary training. However, university is only one of many educational options that opens doors to meaningful career opportunities. Learning is essential, but the way we choose to learn is flexible.

After high school, most teens choose one of the following paths to further learning:

- post-secondary education or training at college, university-college, university, technical institutes or private training institutions
- apprenticeship
- finding work and learning on the job
- volunteering
- taking a year off to work, travel or just figure out their next steps.

Each path has its own benefits.

Identify the areas in which your teens will need support and decide what you can do to help. For example, talk to your teens about what you can contribute to finance their education. Go with them to information sessions and open houses.

Be supportive when your teens encounter obstacles. Because teens lack life experience, problems that may seem small to you may seem insurmountable to them.

Encourage your teens to persevere when they face adversity. Help them find alternative ways to reach their goals.

Tip: Sometimes it's easier to start at the goal and work backwards to the present. For example, perhaps your teen's chosen field requires specific post-secondary training. Start by determining what needs to be done to get this training.

Tools for Successful Career Development and a Successful Career

Career maps

Developing a career map can help your teens make good choices and select the best options for reaching their goals.

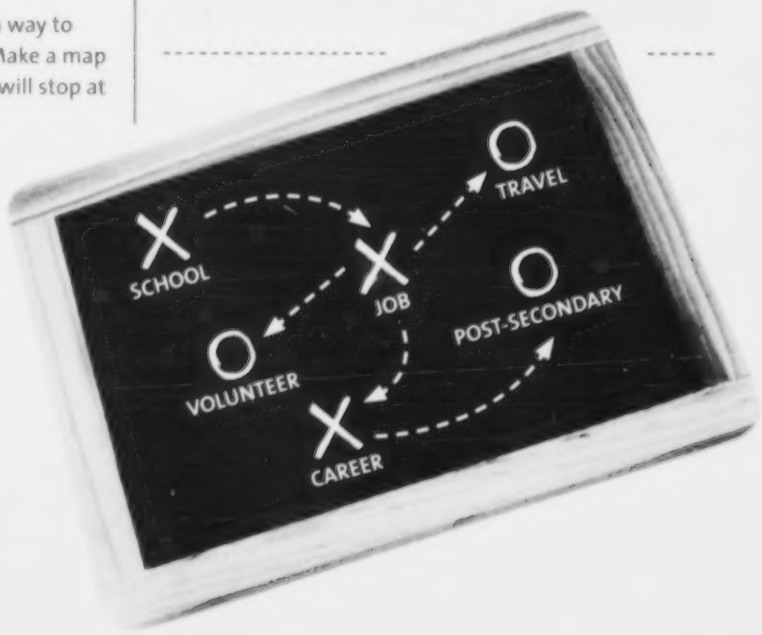
Ask your teens to think about where they want to be when they are 30 years old. Encourage them to dream without limits—to create a vision of what they could be in an ideal world rather than thinking about barriers.

What kinds of things will be important in their life? Will they have a house? Where will they live? Will they be married and have any children? What will their work life look like? What will they do for fun and what will make them happy? Will they work in an office, from home, or have their own company?

Next, work with your teens to come up with a way to get where they want to be when they're 30. Make a map of the path and mark the various places they will stop at along the way. Include school, jobs, travel, volunteer work and other things they want to do or achieve.

Make a map of your own career path and how you got to where you are right now. Try to remember the things that happened to you along the way. Compare your map with your teens' and have a discussion. Are there some useful experiences you could share? What were some of the things that caused you to change your plans? When things didn't go as planned, what did you do to formulate a "Plan B?"

Life is a journey. As people's interests change, they may pursue different work or learning opportunities. Each step they take is a building block for their overall career.



Workplace information

Occupational information

Numerous print and electronic resources offer information to help you and your teens pre-screen occupations to see if they're suitable. Pre-screening may stimulate your teens' interest in a particular occupation or help them eliminate it from their list of possibilities.

The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website includes detailed occupational information for more than 530 occupations available in Alberta. Occupational profiles typically address the following questions:

- What is a particular occupation like?
- How do people get into the occupation and what do they typically earn?
- Is the occupation in a growing field?

ALIS: The world of work at a click

Visit the ALIS website at **alis.alberta.ca**. Click on "Occupational Profiles (OCCinfo)."

Search for occupations by title, interest, industry, subject (related high school subjects), industry and other search options.

In the "Related Resources" section on the OCCinfo page, click on "Video Career Clips" for six-minute videos of real people in real jobs in a wide assortment of occupations.

One of the best ways for teens to determine if a particular occupation is a good fit for them is to talk to people who are working in that field. These people can describe what their day-to-day work involves, and what the daily highs and lows might be. They can talk about where the occupation has been and where the trends are heading. They might even invite your teens to do some job shadowing.

You can help by using your networks to introduce your teens to people in occupations they are interested in. As your teens' coach, you can help them practice their interview skills and improve their confidence level.

Here's a list of questions* your teens can use for an interview

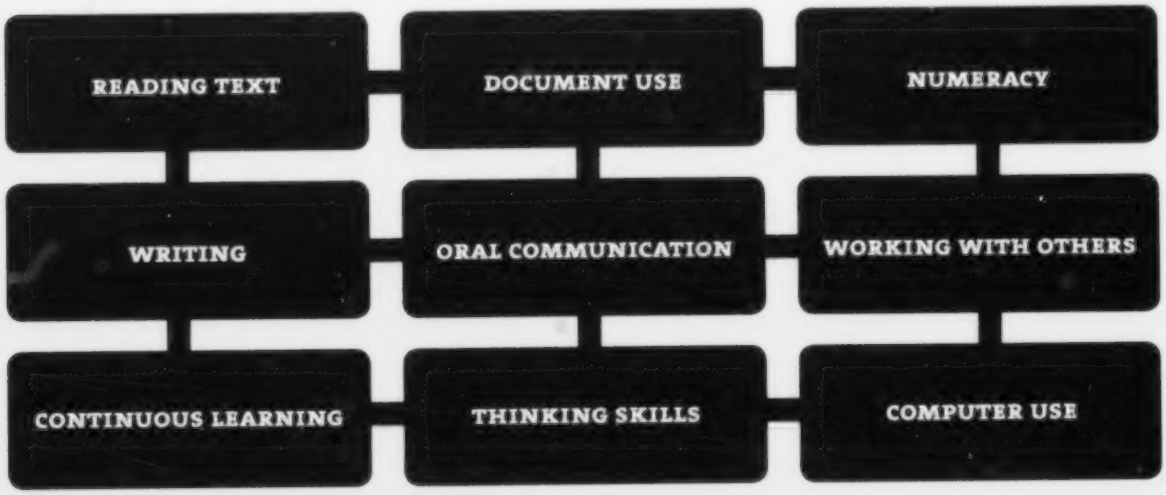
Offer to have your teens interview you before trying out their questions on someone new.

1. What are the specific daily responsibilities of your job?
2. What is your routine on a typical day?
3. What specific education, training or employment experience is required or valuable for this occupation?
4. If you could go back in time, would you choose this same occupation again? Why or why not?
5. What other jobs or volunteer positions did you have before you reached your present position?
6. What opportunities for advancement or lateral movement exist in this occupation?
7. What qualities, skills and abilities do you have that help you be successful in your occupation?
8. How is a new person generally hired for this type of work or position?
9. Every occupation has its downside. What are some of the duties or working conditions that you dislike about this occupation?
10. What is the salary range for this occupation?
11. Can you recommend anyone else who could help me research this occupation?

* adapted from Elk Island Public Schools' Occupation Research Interview Questions Sheet.

Essential skills

Professionals and employers define essential skills as the skills needed for work, learning and life. There are nine essential skills:

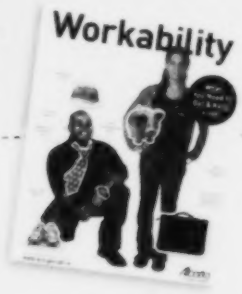


These skills provide the foundation for learning other skills needed for success in the workplace. Learning new skills makes it possible for people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to change.

We continue to learn and develop our skills throughout our lives. As a parent, you can look for your teens' talents, help them recognize the skills they have and talk about the ones they want to develop.

To find out more about essential skills and other skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to find and keep a job, check out the publication *Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job.*

See p. 35 for information on how to get a copy.



Goals

When looking toward the future, it's important to have a plan. Setting goals can help your teens plan for success.

QUICK FACT:

If you write down a goal, you are 50% more likely to achieve it.

Here's how you can help:

- Think about and set goals together with your teens. Talk about how accomplishing short-term goals is a stepping stone for achieving long-term goals.

  For example, if the long-term goal is getting an A in Physics, this might break down into short-term goals like attending all classes, completing all assignments on time and studying four hours for each quiz.

- Choose a goal to work on together. What tasks can your teens do? What tasks require help from you? Discuss what to work on first and how you made that decision.

  For example, did you choose the first task because it was most important? because it was time-sensitive? because it was a pre-requisite for the next tasks on your list? Use the family calendar to set timelines and track progress.

Check out the Resources section (p. 23) for more goal-setting tools and tips.

Areas in which to set goals with your teens

- how many occupations they will research over a period of time
- how many people they will talk to in occupations that interest them
- how many volunteer experiences they will have, and what they want to gain from each of them
- how they will find out what education and training they need to reach their goals
- what kind of grades they will need to get
- how they will develop the skills they need
- how they will develop their career portfolio and keep it up-to-date
- how they will balance school, recreation, work and family

Career portfolio

Most students will work on a career portfolio as part of their school requirements.

A career portfolio is a place to store and organize information about their:

- interests and personality, including formal and informal assessments of their interests and strengths
- skills, including details about workshops, certificates earned and specific skills mastered
- accomplishments and awards, including achievements in school, work or community activities
- work and volunteer history, including a resumé that lists all work and volunteer positions and responsibilities
- career goals and the steps toward achieving them
- letters of reference from people who can speak to their skills and achievements
- research on occupations of interest, including summaries
- details about schools, colleges, universities, training institutions and programs of interest, including brochures or application forms
- favourite resources, such as lists of useful websites and other information sources.

As a parent, you can help by gathering artifacts of your teens' accomplishments along the way. Keep a special box or file folder for report cards, writing samples, awards and certificates: when the time comes for your teens to compile a portfolio, access to these items will be easy.

Tip: Encourage your teens to talk about items they have chosen to include in their portfolios. This will build their confidence in their presentation skills and help them identify their strengths and passions.

Finances

It's never too early to start planning for the cost of a post-secondary education.

For information to help you and your teens plan and fund post-secondary studies, click on the Post-Secondary Students tab of the ALIS website at **alis.alberta.ca**. You'll find PowerPoint presentations, videos, booklets, information sheets and other great tools—including a parental contribution calculator. See p. 26 of the Resources section for details on how to access these materials.

QUICK FACTS:

There are many ways to pay for your teens' education and training. Some involve saving money as your children grow; others include loans, scholarships and bursaries.

Currently, the cost per year of post-secondary education—including the cost of living—is $7,000–$9,000 for a single person living at home and $10,000–$12,000 for someone living away from home.

The High Five

The following High Five messages were developed by career planning experts. They're a solid foundation for successful career and life planning.

Apply the High Five messages as you explore career and life paths with your teens. You may want to talk to your teens about times in your own life when the High Five Messages were important to you.

1. **Change is constant.** Both in work and in life, change is a constant force. But change can also create opportunities. Being flexible, versatile and adaptable can harness the power of change to build career success.

2. **Learning is continuous.** In all contexts, learning is a lifelong process that is intertwined with skills development and work. Together, these activities constitute a continuous cycle of career-building experiences.

3. **Focus on the journey.** Life is a journey of experiences; destinations are just stopping points along the way. Career building requires attention to goals and to all that occurs on the journey toward these goals.

   As your teens continue their career journeys, they may revise their original goals, or achieve them and set new goals.

4. **Follow your heart.** People do their best when they're doing what they love or have a passion for. Pursuing your dreams provides motivation and direction and helps to clarify what's really important.

   When people are building their careers, it's important that they pay attention to what their hearts are telling them.

5. **Lean on your allies and be an ally yourself.** We are all surrounded by people who can assist us in making career decisions and travelling the road of life. Family, friends, neighbours, co-workers and teachers are all potential allies and mentors.

   It's important for people to build networks of allies and to be part of the networks of others.

Summing Up

As a parent, you play a key role in helping your teens succeed. In fact, you are your teens' head coach.

This section sums up the things you can do to help your teens make good career choices.

Check out the "Resources" section on p. 23 for information and resources that can help get you started in your role as a career coach.

Good luck to you and your teens!

Think about the High Five messages (see p. 20) and help your teens use them on their career journey.

Think about your own career journey. Analyze the career and life paths you chose and think about what you learned from your experiences. Share these experiences with your teens when the moment is right.

Show curiosity. Explore your teens' passions, interests, skills and experiences. Take time to learn what's going on with your teens, and find some common ground.

Model what you know and want. Your teens are watching and listening: take the time to model what you say. Ask for your teens' input. Invite them to talk to you and ask them for feedback.

Get involved. Be active in your teens' lives and build experiences you can share and talk about. Once you and your teens get talking, the opportunity for you to help will happen naturally.

Keep career and life planning top of mind. This makes it easy to find learning moments with your teens.

Tap into your networks. Introduce your teens to people and opportunities that are in line with their interests.

Create school and community connections. Attend advisory meetings and keep in touch with your teens' teachers. Visit an Employment and Immigration service centre or Youth Connections office. (See p. 24 for locations.)

Be informed. Take some time to tour colleges, universities or other training facilities.

Take the time to enjoy the journey you are taking with your teens. There will be many moments when you can play a key role in helping your teens achieve their dreams.

Key Terms*

A career is the sum total of a person's life experience. It includes activities such as work, learning, volunteering, parenting and recreational activities. The roles and responsibilities people experience at one stage of life influence their roles and responsibilities at other stages.

Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work and transitions in order to achieve goals and cultivate a meaningful, satisfying future.

A job is a clearly defined working relationship between a specific individual and an employer to complete a defined series of tasks. "Grade 10 Social Studies teacher with Lacombe Composite High School" is a job.

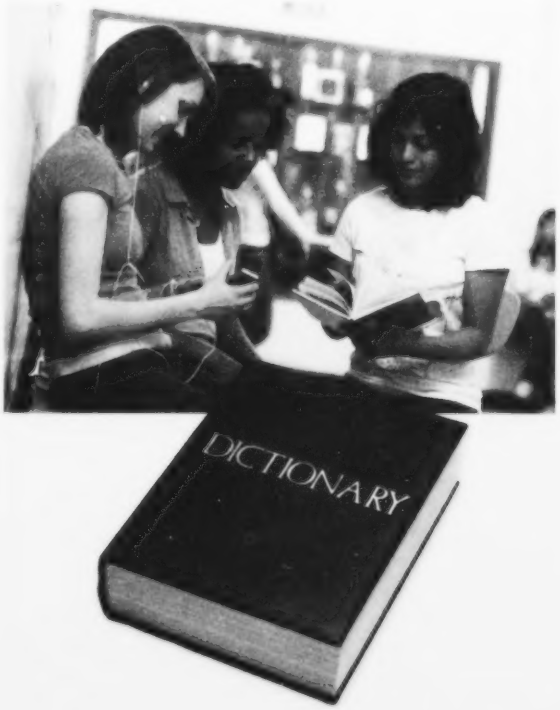
An occupation is a group of jobs with similar characteristics found in different industries or organizations. Teaching is an example of an occupation. While there are several ways to work as a teacher, the occupation remains the same.

A sector is a group of similar occupations that share common skill sets, values and interests. Education is regarded as a sector. It includes educational assistants, teachers and tutors.

Work is a set of activities with an intended set of outcomes. It is not necessarily tied to traditional employment, but may include entrepreneurship, consulting, volunteerism, self-employment or other non-traditional working relationships.

* Adapted from the *Common Career Language Matrix*, Career Development Association of Alberta as cited in *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work*.

The terms **work**, **job**, **occupation** and **career** have different meanings even though people often use them interchangeably.



Resources

There are a number of great resources—people, publications and websites—that can help you in your role as career coach. Use these to build your knowledge, or as a starting point for developing your skills as your teens' coach and ally.

Alberta Employment and Immigration (AEI)

Alberta Employment and Immigration has a province-wide network of websites, call centres and service centres with a variety of programs, services and publications to assist you and your teens.

You can access the department's career, workplace and labour market information in one of three easy ways: click, call or come in.

CLICK

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website

alis.alberta.ca

ALIS is Alberta's online source for career, educational and employment services and information. Here's what you'll find:

- **OCCinfo** includes job descriptions, educational requirements, salary information, employment and advancement opportunities, and projected growth for more than 530 Alberta occupational profiles. Search by occupational title, interests, high school subjects or industry as well as other search options.
- **EDinfo** offers information on Alberta post-secondary programs and schools and on distance learning options available in Western Canada.
- **WAGEinfo** provides wage and salary information by occupation, geographic area and industry group.
- **CERTinfo** answers common questions about certification and registration requirements for regulated professions and trades.
- **Order publications online.** More than 60 career, learning and employment publications are available to order on-line and many can be downloaded as PDF files.
- **Tip Sheets** includes 150 short, easy-to-read articles on career, learning and employment topics. Use the "view by audience" feature for quick access to tips for parents.

CALL

Alberta Career Information Hotline

The Alberta Career Information Hotline is a career consulting and referral service. Hotline staff can answer your questions about:

- career planning
- educational options and funding
- occupational descriptions
- e-resumé review
- labour market information
- work search skills
- the workplace.

Phone: 780-422-4266 (in Edmonton)
1-800-661-3753 (toll-free across Canada)
1-800-232-7215 (Alberta message relay service for deaf or hard of hearing callers)

E-mail: hotline@alis.gov.ab.ca

Website: **alis.alberta.ca/hotline**

COME IN

AEI service centres

Alberta Employment, Industry and Immigration service centres across the province provide information on occupations, career options, finding work, education programs and funding. To locate an office near you, call the Alberta Career Information Hotline or visit the ALIS website **alis.alberta.ca**.

Youth Connections

Youth Connections is a free program connecting motivated young people with businesses looking for employees. The program is for:

- youth who are still in school and who need help with career planning
- Albertans aged 16 to 24 who are unemployed or underemployed, have left school early or have not continued to post-secondary education.

www.employment.alberta.ca/youthconnections

Sector Councils

Sector councils bring together representatives from the key stakeholder groups in an industrial sector. The councils deal with human resources issues and work to identify the most important skills needed in a given sector. They also help youth learn about career options within that sector.

Canada has 32 sector councils. The councils work in specific career sectors, including tourism, resources and mining, software, policing and the automotive sector.

For a list of sector councils in Canada, and to find out more about what the councils do, visit **www.councils.org**.

For one-stop access to sector council career resources and labour market information products, visit **www.workapedia.ca**.

How to get a copy of the publications listed here

Order or download from the Alberta Learning Information Service website at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**.

Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline at **1-800-661-3753** (toll-free in Canada) or **422-5283** (in Edmonton).

Visit an Alberta Employment and Immigration service centre or a Youth Connections Centre. Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline to find the centre nearest you.

Helpful Resources by Topic

Alberta's labour market

For information on Alberta's labour market, visit the ALIS website at **alis.alberta.ca**. Click on the Job Seekers tab and go to Industry & Company Research.

Order or download these publications online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**:

- *Making Sense of Labour Market Information*
- *Alberta Career and Industry Outlook: Economic and other trends affecting the world of work*

Check out the easy-to-read tip sheets on labour market information at **alis.alberta.ca/tips**.

Apprenticeship

For information about apprenticeship and industry training in Alberta, visit the Apprenticeship and Industry Training website at **www.tradesecrets.org** or call **310-0000** and ask to be connected to your nearest Apprenticeship and Industry Training office.

Career portfolio

To find out more about what goes into a career portfolio and how it is used to demonstrate skills to employers, use the "Alphabetical listing" at **alis.alberta.ca/tips** to find the tip sheet "Portfolios: Paving the Way from School to New Opportunities."

Discussing career planning with your teens

Use the "Alphabetical listing" at **alis.alberta.ca/tips** to find the tip sheets "Your Children's Career: Help them Discover Themselves" and "Helping Teenagers Prepare for the World of Work."

For information, resources and strategies to help you support your child's career planning, check out Central Alberta Career Prep *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work* workshop guides at **http://www.careerprep.ab.ca/guidingyouth.htm**.

Education planning

For information on choosing a post-secondary or other training program, order or download these publications online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**:

- *Education and Training Planner*
- *Time to Choose: A post-secondary education program* (published annually).

For information on post-secondary programs, check out the EDinfo database at **alis.alberta.ca/edinfo**. You'll find details on post-secondary schools and programs in Alberta and on distance learning options available in Western Canada.

Check out Learning Clicks at **alis.alberta.ca/learningclicks** for an interactive tool to help students in grades 9 through 12 plan for post-secondary studies.

From the lefthand menu on the Learning Clicks main page, select **Parent Clicks** to find out how to book an in-person presentation that will give parents in your area the tools and resources they need to help their children plan and prepare for post-secondary studies.

Essential skills

For information about the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to find and maintain employment, order or download *Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job* online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**.

To learn more about essential skills and how they are used, visit the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Essential Skills website at **http://srv108.services.gc.ca/**.

Goal setting

Use the "Alphabetical listing" at **alis.alberta.ca/tips** to find the tip sheets "From Dreams to Action" and "Career Planning Step 4: Action Planning."

High Five messages

Order the free book *Lasting Gifts: Parents, Teens and the Career Journey* online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**.

Use the "Alphabetical listing" at **alis.alberta.ca/tips** to find the tip sheet "High 5! A Winning Philosophy for Work and Life."

Identifying interests, values, and skills

For resources to help your teens with the first step in career planning, order or download these publications online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**:

- *Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation*
- *Multiple Choices: Planning Your Career for the 21st Century*
- *Skills Plus Handbook: Discovering Your Personal Career Assets*
- *Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job*

Use the "Alphabetical listing" at **alis.alberta.ca/tips** to find the tip sheet "Career Planning Step 1: Self-Assessment."

Paying for post-secondary education and training

For information to help you and your teens develop a financial plan, check out these resources on the Students Finance website at **alis.alberta.ca/educationfinancing**:

- *Study Your Options Parent Presentation*
- *Helping Your Child Plan* information sheet
- *What's Next: Planning and Financing Your Post-Secondary Education* booklet
- *Owner's Manual: A Guide to Financing Your Education* booklet

To determine your expected parental contribution should your teen apply for a Student Loan go to the online parental contribution calculator at **alis.alberta.ca/studentsfinance/parental**.

For information to help you and your teens explore their career goals, post-secondary schooling options and to research strategies on how to pay for their studies look for the *Planning for Post-Secondary Studies* series for students and parents at **alis.alberta.ca/pset/planning-pubs**.

For information on scholarships and bursaries, see **alis.alberta.ca/scholarships**.

For more information, order or download *Money 101: Budgeting Basics for Further Education* online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**.

Researching occupations

For job descriptions, educational requirements, salary information, employment and advancement opportunities, and projected growth for more than 530 Alberta occupational profiles, check out the occupational profiles at **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**. Search by job title, interests, school subjects or industry and other search options.

Order or download these publications online at **alis.alberta.ca/careershop**:

- *Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation*
- *Finding Out: How to Get the Information You Need to Make the Choice You Want*

Visit **alis.alberta.ca/video** to view your choice of six-minute video clips showing real people in real positions in a wide assortment of occupations.

For more video career clips, check out **www.vector.cfee.org**.

Feedback

We'd like to hear from you ...

Career Coaching Your Teens **Date:**

Send your comments to the address or fax number provided at the bottom of this page:

What specific information in this publication did you find useful? How did it help you?

How could we improve this publication? What was not useful?

Do you have any suggestions for other information or other publications that would be of value to you?

Please return this form to:

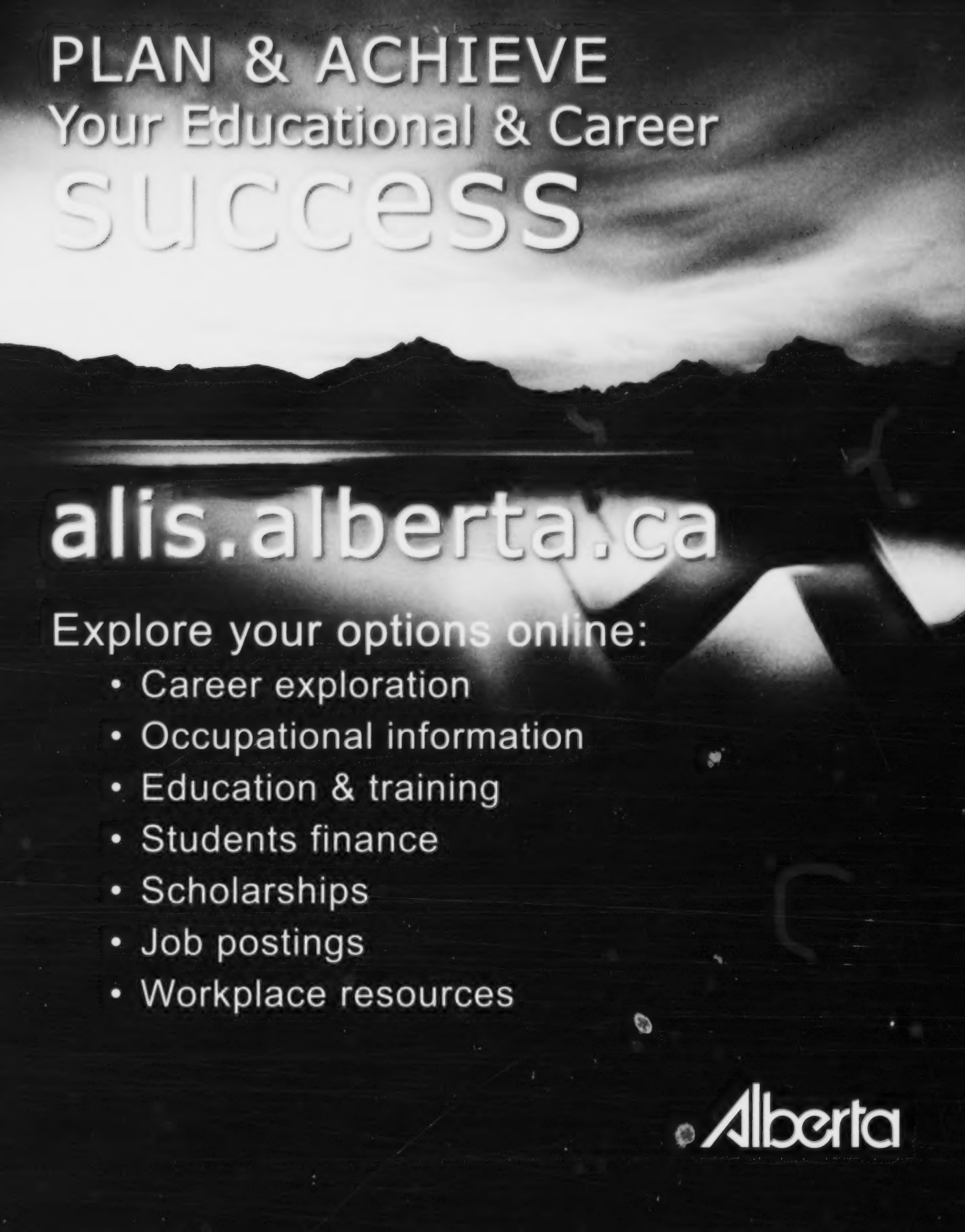
People, Skills and Workplace Resources
Alberta Employment and Immigration

Mail: **12th Floor, South Tower, Capital Health Centre,**
10030–107 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4

or

Fax: **780-422-5319**

To view a complete list of our publications, visit alis.alberta.ca/careershop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Explore your options online:
• Career exploration
• Occupational information
• Education & training
• Students finance
• Scholarships
• Job postings
• Workplace resources
Alberta

Did you know that parents are the greatest influence on their teens' career choices?

This guide will help you support your teens as they explore career options and make decisions about the future. It provides practical ideas and resources you can use in your role as a parent, a coach and an ally.